

Supervisor skills



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Six Skills to Successful Supervision Supervisors are an important part of any organization. They are charged with ensuring the will of management is carried out by the workers. A supervisor must communicate with that team. He or she must orient and train the employees. Their employees must be made to work as a well functioning, productive team. Employees must have the performance evaluated. Any conflicts that arise must be resolved and the working relationship must always be improved. Communication Well performing teams can not be built without good communication.

A good supervisor must possess the ability to relay clearly their own thoughts, listen to the ideas of others and ensure the will of management is executed. Excellent communication is the tool to that end. The goal of communication in the workplace is to exchange ideas efficiently and unambiguously. A supervisor will have to train employees and educate them on corporate policy. He or she must also listen to the ideas and complaints of subordinates. The supervisor must also be able to take instructions from upper management and keep them informed as well.

Effective communication should be considered a loop between the speaker and the listener. Whether in written form or verbal some basic ideas one must keep in mind when communicating with others. Before writing or speaking consider the audience. This step will establish the medium for the communication to take place and the tone that should be used. When speaking to upper management one should adopt a more respectful posture. Clearly state the main points. Use simple language to let the reader/listener know what is to be communicated.

People may have difficulty paying attention if the main point is obscured by rambling language or poor structure. Do not leave room for ambiguity. Be specific about any action that is required. Make sure to include dates for deadlines. Do not let emotions color the tone of a written document or conversation. When we communicate with another person we are asking something of them. We are asking them to pay attention to what we are trying to express. There may be more but that is an implied request on the part of all speakers. Since we are asking for something the tone should be polite and to the point.

A tone that appears angry or too aggressive may prevent the recipient from grasping the objective. Effective communication is not just expressing one's own ideas but listening to the ideas of others as well. Supervisors must listen to and understand directions given by upper management. Furthermore their subordinates will want to express complaints, suggest improvements or share other ideas. Good listening is not a passive act of sitting back and letting someone speak. Good listening, and thus good communication, requires active listening. Dr.

Nadig observes active listening occurs when, " " we are also genuinely interested in understanding what the other person is thinking, feeling, wanting or what the message means" (2007). One must not day dream or interrupt. Day dreaming while someone speaks is considered passive listening by Dr. Nadig (2007). Interrupting is a sign that one is placing more value on his or her thoughts and is called combative listening. The first step is to understand the goal of the communication; what reason does the

speaker have to be speaking. Understanding their goal will help to highlight main points and key concepts.

Finding the main point of the conversation will allow sharper focus. In many cases the speaker will expect some action to be taken so knowing the objective is essential. Communication has a nonverbal side as well. Pay attention to body language. Look for signs that indicate how the speaker feels. This will be an important step to understanding their goal and how a response should be stated. One must keep in mind not to let personal emotions obscure the speaker's intent. Keeping an even temper will encourage an upset speaker to calm down. In many cases their concerns may be resolved just by being given an opportunity to speak.

A key part of active listening is to provide feedback to the speaker. This is done by restating the key points of the speaker. Restating will show the speaker that he or she is being listened to which will improve the rapport and further enhance communication. The speaker will also have the opportunity to clear up any misunderstood points. Paraphrasing will also aid in remembering the conversation for later. Determining Effective Orientation and Training Methods The first day of work can be intimidating for anyone; even for those who have been in the workforce for many years.

Nervousness, while not unusual, can be detrimental to the goals of a company. Taking the time to ensure all new employees are acquainted with their coworkers and surrounding can reduce insecurity and boost moral. A thorough training program will also help to eliminate mistakes, ensure procedures are followed and increase employee confidence. Orientation

should be held on the first day. Employees should be given an opportunity to introduce themselves and learn about the others that are being going to be in orientation with them. This will help them relax and feel more comfortable asking questions.

This is a good time to take care of paper work. Payroll and tax forms should be filled completed as well as any other necessary documents. This is also a good time to discuss the company and its plans. The employee should also be introduced to the hierarchy of the company. This will allow them to see where the fit into the organization and who they can go to for assistance. A physical tour of the area will further put them at ease and prevent anyone from being lost. Improving Productivity for Teams “ Many hands make light work,” this adage is especially true in the highly competitive global marketplace.

Expecting one individual to have all the solutions simply is not practical. By working in teams we can increase our knowledge base and experience to something far more than one person can possess. In order to understand how to make a teamwork best we should discuss how teams fail. There many traps that a group can fall into but we are only going to look at a few. Most people have an innate desire to stick out too much; a desire to fit in with the group. This normal social response can be very destructive to a group. The entire point of a team is having people working together towards a goal.

Attaining the objective will be difficult if those selected for a team have anxiety about straying from the group’s perceived will. This phenomenon is called group think. The other extreme of group think occurs when a team

lacks cohesion. This occurs when a team member's are moving indifferent directions, arguing unproductively or simply not participating. A lack of cohesion may be caused by the team's objective note being well defined. For the team to work well everyone must agree on the expected results. Not having strong leadership can also cause a team to fall apart.

One person must be selected to act as a facilitator. Their job is to make sure the team stays on a fruitful tack. For a team to perform optimally each team member must serve a purpose. People should be chosen because their knowledge and experience plays an important role. A very important point here is not to be concerned with status within the company. There may be a reluctance to enlist the lower level employees on a team. Their experience, however, might prove to be essential in finding a solution. For example, management may not use a customer dispute software package at all.

If trying to improve the call logging time a seasoned wage-earning employee may prove helpful. Conducting Performance Appraisals In order to maintain our individual health we will get an examination from a doctor. Our current condition will be reviewed and any risky diagnosis will be treated. Even if found to be healthy a good doctor might identify areas that could be improved. This is essentially the same objective of a performance appraisal, like checkup for the employees. When conducting these checkups two techniques to keep in mind; be fair and be consistent.

The purpose of employee reviews is to come to an understanding with the employee about current ability and how improvements can be made. To that end the evaluator must be honest with her or himself and the individual

being reviewed. The goal is to help all employees improve; friend that gets a pass also loses an opportunity to become a better asset to the firm.

Furthermore, if other team members suspect favoritism the integrity of the process is destroyed. Those who have earned poor reviews may simply dismiss them because they are not the supervisor's pet.

Personal feeling must not get in the way nor should any activity not directly related to work. Since the goal of the review process is to increase performance maintaining consistency will be helpful. Every employee should know how they will be evaluated and on what time frame. A fixed time frame can help employees meet goals. Having a consistent cycle will also help keep the reviewer from using the most recent conduct as the sole basis of the review. The method for evaluation should also be consistent. This will allow the employee to be prepared for the review and keep the process fair.

Resolving Conflict

Flanagan and Runde tell us conflicts, “ are situation in which people have incompatible interests, goals, principals or feelings” (Flanagan, Runde, 2004, p. 19). This can encompass quite a bit in a work environment. Modern populations move readily for work bringing with them their own beliefs and customs. The workplace, too, is endlessly evolving. Corporate mergers, new management trends and changing business models all provide challenges for the supervisor. One part of conflict resolution is understanding the underlying problem. The other part is to take action; resolving problems can be delicate and takes some skill.

Understanding the root cause of a conflict is essential to resolving it and preventing future problems. Fear of change is one cause of for conflict. Change can be frightening and employees may feel they are becoming obsolete. They might also be concerned if they can adapt to the new change. Interpersonal problems between coworkers can cause conflict as well. Diversity is a true advantage, but different personalities can create friction. A good supervisor must be able to get different people to work to a common goal. Resolving conflict—the action part—requires finesse.

On one hand, the supervisor must be patient and understanding. Taking the time to show some compassion can go a long way to building goodwill with an employee. In some case just letting a person vent can resolve a predicament. On the other hand, the supervisor is an agent for the company. Allowing employees to air their problems is relevant only so long as it serves the company's overall-interests. The supervisor is not there to act as consular. A firm tone should be taken when talking to employees and always move to the fact that they are there to do a job. Improving Employee Relations

Employee relations can be viewed as the process by which an individual's workplace behavior is brought to full potential or corrected. The process of helping employees achieve their full potential to the company is accomplished through motivation. The discipline process is used to correct undesired behavior. Knowledge of both areas is required for a successful supervisor. Motivating employees begins on the first day by investigating that individual's long-term goals. The knowledge that a new hire is looking to

get a supervisor position as soon as possible can be used to encourage adherence to rules.

For example, one could make it clear that tardiness could severely delay any opportunities for advancement. An employee is less likely to commit an act that requires discipline when they have attained a sense of job satisfaction. A good supervisor provides this by regularly talking to the employees about their job. Doing so will not only help identify potential problem areas and make sure proper resources are available to complete tasks, but will also give the leader an understanding of that employee. For instance, a shy employee may have trouble expressing the computer they use is too underpowered to complete some work.

Regular, informal talks would help a supervisor understand this individual may need more encouragement to speak up. This understanding can help fix a problem rather than writing up an employee later for failure to complete the task. Part of motivating an employee is showing interest. Many employees may have to be disciplined for failure to follow procedures. One example is check-out clerks/cashiers not following policy set forth by accounting. The problem is not typically an unwillingness to do what is right, but rather a sign that the rules were explained poorly.

Often rules can seem unnecessary and burdensome to those not familiar with the overall objectives. Educating staff how the rules fit into a larger system of controls and reporting requirements will keep the cashiers from believing the rules to be unimportant. Explaining how all the pieces fit together will also aid in remembering the steps by making the process less

abstract. Even the very best supervisor who has done everything to train and motivate the staff will have to discipline individuals from time to time. This is not a chore many will enjoy.

Fears of hurt feelings or ruining friendships can make the task very difficult. A supervisor must remember to be dispassionate in this area and always act in the business' best interest. In order for the discipline process to have integrity it must be fairly administered. Part of keeping the process honest is to keep good records. Rue and Byars illustrate the importance of keeping a log of employee infractions (Rue and Byars , 2004, p. 385). One reason a log is important is to confront the employee. When discussing an employees behavior specific date, times and actions will be more significant than vague claims.

A chronically tardy employee, for example, may not even be aware how often he or she has been late until seeing an actual list. An accurate log can also protect the supervisor from claims of unfair treatment. The company needs to be protected as well. A disgruntled employee may attempt legal action in retaliation of some disciplinary action. Proper documentation can limit the company's liability. A progressive approach should be established when disciplining employees. This type of discipline incorporates education into the process.

The goal is to encourage the employee to modify behavior before termination is required by increasing the punishment on successive infractions. A common approach is to first use an informal oral warning, then a written warning, next suspension and finally termination (Gill, 2008). The

employee should be incorporated into a constructive discipline process. At the first stage the one being discipline should be confronted with the evidence and encouraged to comment on them. At the second step the employee should sign the form. Doing so not only protects the supervisor but also reinforces the idea that corrective action is needed.

Improving employee relations is a constant process. Part of the process is proactive; that is keeping the staff motivated and willing to communicate openly and follow company rules. At the other end of the process, when an individual is found to have violated a rule he or she must be disciplined. For discipline to be effective it must be evenly applied and constructive.

Conclusion Getting the best out of a person is difficult; getting the best out of a group of people even more so. To accomplish that end a supervisor must be patient and communicate well.